



Texas Department of Transportation

VEHICLE TITLES AND REGISTRATION DIVISION • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78779-0001 • (512) 465-7611

December 20, 2000

Registration and Title Bulletin # 115-00

To: All County Tax Assessor-Collectors

Subject: "License Plate of the Month" Program

PURPOSE

To share information about a new program that we will begin in 2001 to better promote the specialty license plates offered by the Texas Department of Transportation.

DETAILS

As you know, the department currently offers approximately 85 specialty license plates that are available to the general public -- including 41 collegiate plates.

In the past, VTR has left all specialty plate marketing and promotion to the groups that benefit from their sale. Some groups, such as Texas A&M University and the Texas Commission on the Arts, have been very successful at generating sales and income; others have made little or no effort to generate interest in their specialty plates. Therefore, in an effort to increase sales and generate positive media coverage for the agency and your offices, we will begin "License Plate of the Month" program in January 2001. As the name suggests, a different specialty tag would be highlighted each month; the program would start with the top seller and work its way down (Please Refer to Attachment #1). Exceptions to this formula may be made depending on seasonal tie-ins.

TxDOT ACTION

As part of the program, VTR's Public Information Officer will prepare the following monthly:

- A news release and media advisory announcing the specialty license plate for a particular month (a graphic of the plate would be included on the release and advisory). Copies would be sent to TxDOT's Public Information Office (PIO) via e-mail for further distribution to the capitol press. PIO would also send the release and advisory to the Public Information Officers in the agency's 25 District offices statewide for distribution to the local news media. The releases and advisories will also be posted on TxDOT's web site (www.dot.state.tx.us).
- A Registration and Title Bulletin (RTB) to all county tax assessor-collectors announcing the specialty license plate for a particular month. A "shell" news release would be attached so that you could customize and send to their local media, if desired.

PROGRAM KICKOFF

Because the "License Plate of the Month" Program starts in January 2001, we have attached the news releases that'll promote personalized license plates (Please Refer to Attachments #2 & #3).

December 20, 2000

VTR CONTACT PERSON(S)

If you have any questions about this specialty plate program, contact your local regional office manager; or, call Mr. Mike Viesca, VTR Public Information Officer, at (512) 302-2076. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Dike". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jerry" and last name "Dike" clearly distinguishable.

Jerry L. Dike, Director
Vehicle Titles and
Registration Division

Attachment

cc: Ms. C. Eloise Lundgren, PIO
District Engineers, Attn: PIOs

Specialty "License Plate of the Month" Program
Calendar Year 2001

<u>Specialty Plate</u>	<u>11/2000 Sales</u>	<u>Month Featured</u>	<u>RTB Distribution</u>
1) Personalized	64,962	January	12/27/00
2) State of the Arts	19,930	February	01/24/01
3) Animal Friendly	12,209	March	02/21/01
4) Wildlife (Horned Lizard)	8,740	April	03/23/01
5) Collegiate (41)*	15,889	May	04/23/01
6) Volunteer Advocate	2,797	June	05/21/01
7) Big Bend National Park	1,521	July	06/22/01
8) Read to Succeed**	1,590	August	07/24/01
9) Antique (+ Motorcycles)	29,390	September	08/24/01
10) Classic (Auto/Trk/Motor)	7,487	October	09/21/01
11) Military***	60,844	November	10/23/01
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed Forces Reserve • Desert Storm • Disabled Veteran • Prisoner of War • Pearl Harbor • Purple Heart • Vietnam Veteran • Texas Guard • Army • Navy • Air Force • Marines • Marine Corps League • Korean Veteran • WWII Veteran • Gold Star Mother 			
12) Coastal Conservation Assoc.	678	December	11/16/01

*May is college graduation month

**August is back-to-school month

***November has Veterans Day



Texas Department of Transportation

news

Vehicle Titles and Registration Division
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Austin, Texas 78731
512/302-2076 FAX 512/467-5909



FOR RELEASE January 2001

Personalized license plates help Texas motorists express themselves

(AUSTIN) Why keep your thoughts to yourself when you can share them with everyone else on the road? The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) can help you express yourself with a set of personalized license plates for your car or truck.

Currently displayed on more than 65,000 vehicles, personalized plates are the state's most popular specialty tags. Vanity plates run the gamut, from first and last names to company names and clever messages or phrases. Each application for a personalized tag is carefully screened for obscene or offensive messages. The license plates are manufactured by the Texas prison system in Huntsville and sent to the customer within two weeks of application.

Personalized plates are available for \$40 in addition to the price of regular vehicle registration. Fees from personalized tags go to the General Revenue Fund, where they are used for a variety of state services and programs. In a one-year period ending August 31, 2000, personalized tags accounted for approximately \$2.8 million of that fund.

Motorists who want a set of personalized plates can get them at any time, regardless of when their vehicle registration expires. Applications for these tags are available at all county tax assessor-collector offices, and on the Internet at www.dot.state.tx.us. Personalized license plates accommodate up to six characters; however, some specialty plates can only have up to five characters. More information is available from TxDOT's Special Plates Branch at (512) 374-5010; or by calling the vehicle registration and titling help desk at (512) 465-7611.

TxDOT began its personalized license plate program in 1965.

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For more information, call Mike Viesca, TxDOT Vehicle Titles and Registration Division, at 512/302-2076. Information about TxDOT is also available through the department's World Wide Web site (<http://www.dot.state.tx.us>).



FOR RELEASE, January 2001

Personalized license plates help Texas motorists express themselves

Why keep your thoughts to yourself when you can share them with everyone else on the road? The (COUNTY NAME) County Tax Assessor-Collectors Office can help you express yourself with a set of personalized license plates for your car or truck.

Currently displayed on more than 65,000 vehicles, personalized plates are the state's most popular specialty tags. "Vanity plates run the gamut, from first and last names to company names and clever messages or phrases," said (COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR'S NAME), (COUNTY NAME) County Tax Assessor-Collector. "Each application for a personalized plate is carefully screened by the Texas Department of Transportation for obscene or offensive messages." The license plates are manufactured by the Texas prison system in Huntsville and sent to the customer within two weeks of application.

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Motorists who want a set of personalized plates can get them at any time, regardless of when their vehicle registration expires. Applications for these tags are available at the county tax assessor-collector's office, and on the Internet at www.dot.state.tx.us. Personalized license plates accommodate up to six characters; however, some specialty plates can only have up to five characters. More information is available by calling this office at (PHONE NUMBER).

The (COUNTY NAME) County Tax Office is an agent for the Texas Department of Transportation, which started its personalized license plate program in 1965.

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For more information, call (COUNTY CONTACT PERSON'S NAME), (CONTACT PERSON'S TITLE), at (CONTACT PERSON'S PHONE NUMBER).



Vehicle Titles & Registration Division's "License Plate of the Month" Program

The Goal: To promote the Texas Department of Transportation's specialty license plate program in an effort to increase sales and generate positive media coverage for the agency and the county tax assessor-collectors, who serve as TxDOT's statutory agents for motor vehicle registration and titling.

Current Specialty License Plate Promotion

The Texas Department of Transportation's Vehicle Titles and Registration Division (VTR) offers approximately 85 specialty license plates that are available to the general public... including 41 collegiate plates (See attached list). These specialty plates are listed on the Internet at <http://www.dot.state.tx.us/insdot/orgchart/vtr/reginfo/spplates/specplat.htm>; there are links for each that show a graphic of the plate, along with a description of eligibility requirements, cost, and where the money is allocated.

Information about the top-selling specialty plates is also printed on the vehicle registration renewal insert, which is mailed to approximately 1.5 million motorists each month. VTR also produces a color Texas License Plates poster that is mailed to all county tax offices, law enforcement agencies, and other interested partners (the poster is for sale to the general public). Lastly, a black and white 8.5" x 11" brochure entitled "Texas License Plates" is also updated biannually and distributed free of charge at conferences, etc.

In the past, VTR has left all specialty plate marketing and promotion to the groups that benefit from their sale. Some groups, such as Texas A&M University and the Texas Commission on the Arts, have been very successful at generating sales and income; others have not made any effort to generate interest in their specialty plates.

Proposed Specialty License Plate Promotion

Promotion of Texas specialty license plates would be based around a "License Plate of the Month" program. As the name suggests, a different specialty tag would be highlighted each month; the program would start with the top seller and work its way down. Exceptions to this formula may be made depending on seasonal tie-ins.

As part of the program, VTR's Public Information Officer would prepare the following each month:

- A news release and media advisory announcing the specialty license plate for a particular month (a graphic of the plate would be included on the release and advisory). Copies would be sent to TxDOT's Public Information Office (PIO) via e-mail for further distribution to the capitol press. PIO would also send the release and advisory to the Public Information Officers in the agency's 25 District offices statewide for distribution to the local news media. The releases and advisories would also be posted on TxDOT's web site (www.dot.state.tx.us).

- A Registration and Title Bulletin (RTB) to all county tax assessor-collectors announcing the specialty license plate for a particular month. A "shell" news release would be attached so that these county officials could customize and send to their local media, if desired. Carbon copies of this correspondence would be sent to TxDOT Administration, PIO, and the Districts; blind carbon copies would go to all VTR managers.

Time Line

The "License Plate of the Month" program would begin in January 2001 with the personalized license plate, TxDOT's top seller (See attachment). A letter announcing the highlighted plate would be mailed approximately one week prior to the beginning of each new month.

Expected Results

It is expected that the "License Plate of the Month" program will lead to the following:

- Increased awareness of the variety of specialty license plates that are available to the motoring public.
- Increased sales of specialty license plates (though no specific sales targets or goals have been established).
- Positive media coverage and publicity for TxDOT and the county tax assessor-collectors.

Programs in Other Jurisdictions

Most motor vehicle agencies in other states leave specialty plate promotion up to each organization. However, some jurisdictions have extensive programs in place:

- *New York State* supplies tent cards and posters to its district offices and to county clerk offices that sell specialty plates on site. Advertisements are also run in magazines produced by sister agencies. Paid advertisements are run in local newspapers during special events, such as the recent World Series match up, in which the New York Mets played the New York Yankees. The agency also has a list of specialty plates on its web site.
- The *Commonwealth of Virginia* runs notices on renewal notices, web site, driver's manual, and on posters/tent cards. At the customer service centers, the clipboards given to customers to complete their forms contain space promoting specialty license plates. Agency employees are also being used to boost sales of specialty plates. They get 25 cents for each special plate they sell and 25 cents for each personalized plate sold; specialty plate sales have increased 13.5% in the past year alone. Virginia is also starting to market souvenir plates of all its designs.
- The *State of Indiana* will soon begin a program in which they'll ask all special recognition groups to share in the cost of a poster featuring all the plates. This poster would be displayed in all license branches throughout the state and would be updated annually; the affected groups would have the option of joining or leaving each year. If a group doesn't wish to participate, it will still be featured in the book and stuffer, but it will not have the opportunity to put promotional materials in agency branches. In addition, each branch will have a book featuring all the available license plates for customers to see before purchasing a special plate. All available plates are also promoted through registration renewal notices.



Texas Department of Transportation

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Special License Plates

To order any of the specialty plates below, contact your local county tax assessor-collector (in some cases, applicant must meet certain eligibility requirements).

ORGANIZATIONS

- [Animal Friendly](#)
- [Big Bend National Park](#)
- [TX Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse \(Boy Scouts Plate\)](#)
- [New Girl Scouts](#)
- [Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo](#)
- [Keep Texas Beautiful](#)
- [Lone Star Proud](#)
- [New Millennium](#)
- [Olympic Spirit](#)
- [Read to Succeed](#)
- [State of the Arts](#)
- [Texas Aerospace Commission](#)
- [New Texas Agricultural Products](#)
- [Texas Citrus Industry](#)
- [Texas Department of Economic Development \(Texas-It's Like A Whole Other Country\)](#)
- [Texas Parks and Wildlife Conservation \(Horned Lizard\)](#)
- [New Waterfowl and Wetland Conservation](#)
- ["And Justice For All"](#)

MILITARY/VETERANS

- [Armed Forces Reserve](#)
- [Coast Guard Auxiliary](#)
- [Desert Storm](#)
- [Disabled Vet](#)
- [Former POW](#)
- [Gold Star Mother](#)
- [Korea Veteran](#)
- [Legion of Valor](#)
- [Marine Corps League](#)
- [Pearl Harbor Survivor](#)
- [Purple Heart Recipient](#)
- [Texas Guard](#)

COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES

- [Abilene Christian University](#)
- [Austin College](#)
- [Baylor University](#)
- [Brookhaven College](#)
- [East Texas Baptist University](#)
- [East Texas State University](#)
- [Houston Baptist University](#)
- [Howard Payne University](#)
- [Huston-Tillotson College](#)
- [Incarnate Word College](#)
- [Lamar University](#)
- [Midwestern State University](#)
- [McMurry University](#)
- [Parker College of Chiropractic](#)
- [Prairie View A&M University](#)
- [Rice University](#)
- [Richland College](#)
- [Sam Houston State University](#)
- [Stephen F. Austin State University](#)
- [Southern Methodist University](#)
- [Southwest Texas State University](#)
- [Southwestern University](#)
- [Tarleton State University](#)
- [Texas A&M University](#)
- [Texas A&M, Corpus Christi](#)
- [Texas Chiropractic College](#)
- [Texas Christian University](#)
- [Texas Lutheran University](#)
- [Texas Tech University](#)
- [Texas Southern University](#)
- [Texas Wesleyan University](#)
- [University of Houston](#)
- [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#)
- [University of North Texas](#)
- [University of Saint Thomas](#)
- [University of Texas at Arlington](#)
- [University of Texas at Austin](#)
- [University of Texas at Brownsville - Texas Southmost College](#)
- [University of Texas at El Paso](#)
- [University of Texas at San Antonio](#)
- [West Texas A&M University](#)

- Texas Guard
- U.S. Air Force
- U.S. Army
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Marine Corps
- U.S. Navy
- Vietnam Veteran
- World War II Veteran

- West Texas A&M University

MISCELLANEOUS

- Amateur Radio Operator
- Antique Vehicle
- Classic Auto
- Classic Motorcycle
- Classic Truck
- Former Military Vehicle
- Parade Vehicle
- Peace Officer
- Personalized Plates
- State Capitol
- Texas Wing Civil Air Patrol
- Volunteer Firefighter

Vehicle Title and Registration Page

Updated October 30, 2000